

MONONGAHELA CONNECTING RAILROAD COMPANY,
Y TRESTLE
South side of the Monongahela River
between 34th and 29th Streets
Pittsburgh
Allegheny County
Pennsylvania

HAER No. PA-277-A

HAER
PA
2-PITBU
65A-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD
National Park Service
Northeast Region
U.S. Custom House
200 Chestnut Street
Philadelphia, PA 19106

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD
MONONGAHELA CONNECTING RAILROAD COMPANY, Y TRETTLE
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Location: South side of the Monongahela River
between 34th and 29th Streets, Pittsburgh,
Allegheny County, Pennsylvania

USGS, Pittsburgh East Quadrangle, Universal
Transverse Mercator Coordinates
17.588150.4475609

Date of Construction: 1899

Engineer: Unknown

Architect: Unknown

Present Owner: Monongahela Connecting Railroad Company

Present Use: Out of Service

Significance: Permitted access between The Monongahela
Connecting Railroad and former Pittsburgh
and Lake Erie Railroad. P&LE was a major
hauler of raw materials into and semi-
finished steel products from former Jones &
Laughlin Steel plant (now LTV Steel).

Project Information: LTV Steel Corporation -- has demolished its
steel-making facilities in its South Side
plant. As a result, the Mon Con has
applied to the Interstate Commerce
Commisssion for and received permission to
abandon its rail lines and facilities on
the South Side. The Y Trestle will not be
used after April 30, 1993, and is scheduled
for demolition in late 1993.

Richard L. McCombs
Vice President - Operations
Monongahela Connecting Railroad Company
3600 Second Avenue
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

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The Y Trestle was approved for construction by the Board of Directors at a meeting held January 11, 1899. There is no record of cost or completion date. The original tracings, which the Mon Con has in its possession -- sample copies attached, are dated 1898, and were prepared by Fort Pitt Bridge Works. It is assumed that they were the designers and erectors, however, there are no records to confirm this assumption.

The original purpose of the Y Trestle was to provide a connection from the Main Bridge and the north side of the Jones & Laughlin plant to The Pittsburgh and Lake Erie Railroad which ran below and through the south side part of the J&L plant. It connected directly to the Main Bridge with a curved section of eight spans, then a straight section adjacent to and parallel with the P&LE Railroad 1030 feet long consisting of twenty-two - 40 foot spans, three - 20 foot spans plus one at 30 feet and one at 60 feet. The curved sections, approximately 360 feet in length, were back filled with dirt in approximately 1913, as J&L reclaimed some low-lying property for plant use. The trestle was built on a descending grade of 1.7% grade from the end of the Main Bridge to the 34th Street area.

The trestle was very important in the development of the J&L plant. First, it provided a much more efficient connection to the P&LE Railroad than that which was currently in place. The P&LE had become and was to continue in that role until the demise of the steel industry in Western Pennsylvania, one of the primary line haul carriers to service the many steel mills in the Monongahela River Valley. Secondly, the trestle provided a connection to the rest of the plant for the bar mills, tar tanks and skull breaker which were built on the lower level on the river side of the P&LE main line.

J&L built a plant in Aliquippa, Pennsylvania in 1906-07, which was to ultimately surpass Pittsburgh Works in capacity. The only rail connection into Aliquippa was the P&LE, therefore, anything shipped by rail between the two plants had to be shipped P&LE with access in Pittsburgh over the Y Trestle. It was not until the 1950's, when the Mon Con built another connection to the P&LE at 17th Street, that the Y Trestle ceased to be the only connection between P&LE-Mon Con.

J&L became LTV in the late 1970's and shut the South Side operation down in 1985. Demolition of the South Side plant began shortly thereafter. There was an attempt by an organization called South Side Steel Company to purchase the Electric Furnace Shop and Blooming Mills, however, it was not successful because of lack of funding. LTV continued with its demolition and will complete same by mid-summer, 1993. The last of the demolition scrap from LTV will be shipped by April 30, 1993, and the Y Trestle will then be taken out of service. It is scheduled for demolition in late 1993.